

## A Life Lesson Well Learned

Letting go has never been an easy thing for me. I've always been a sentimental person. I never understood why we needed to let go of things that meant something to us. Make it objects or people. Everyone would say that letting go of current things would allow space for new things.

*Why can't we keep everything?* I would think to myself, *I don't need new things if I'm comfortable with the old ones.*

My family likes to clean the house and they discard so many things I'd consider valuable to my heart. It has irritated me because sometimes they throw away some of the things I want to keep.

"You don't need to keep so many things, it crowds the house," they would say to me. But those things can remind me of my memories. I would pick them up and my mind would go to the memories or the history of that object. It would pull the memory from the corners of my mind.

My family would say that you don't need the object to keep the memory. But I have so many memories I don't always think about them. These objects help me remember the memories that I have again. They still don't understand.

However, sometimes letting go is good. I didn't find that out until quite later in my life. If it's hurting you or hindering your progress, you must let go. If it brings more harm than good, you have to let go. I sometimes think of times where I should have let go of my old friends and allowed myself to have new friends.

I was about to have lunch. As I walked in the lunchroom with their dull painted walls, my stomach grumbled. I swept my eyes across the tables filled with chattering students talking about the latest gossip about the new teacher. There was a smell of delicious meat and rice in the air. The warm, but crowded atmosphere of the cafeteria washed over me. Usually I would sit with my three other best friends or the people I've been with since the start of secondary school. I've stuck to them since the beginning and I haven't given other people a chance. It was year 9 now and 2 years of our friendship. I looked for them among the heads of students but then I remembered that this was a new term.

*What do I do now? I don't want to sit alone looking lonely.* It was a new term and I didn't have the same room as my friends. However, because of covid we had two lunch times. I was split from my friends. They had lunch at a different time than me.

*Just my luck,* I internally sighed. They were the people I decided to stick to because they were the first friends I made at this school when I felt lost in the social constructs of school. I never did get to be in the same room as me. We unfortunately only got to see each other at lunch.

I considered them my best friends and I haven't let go of that title since the start. I stuck to them like glue and similar to the objects I'd hang on to. But looking back now I should have let go. We were just people who happened to sit at the same table. I didn't think about how we didn't get along that much or clicked like others. I should have opened myself up more and acquired another best friend before they were all taken.

When I walked into the lunchroom and realized that now I had no one to sit with. I suddenly felt overcome with momental despair. I've been trying to hold the friendship of my 3 friends and I for so long. But lately the friendship has been hanging on by a thread. *I should have seen it coming.* As I walked through the lunchroom I looked around for familiar faces.

I saw my current classmate that I'd sit next to and asked if they had a seat. "Of course! You can sit right here." She gestured to a seat right next to her. I sat down and at that moment I realized that I'd let go. I smiled softly at her. *Now I feel like this is the start of a new era.* I've let go of my old friends that I didn't really fit with and found someone new that would actually appreciate me.

I realized how much I loved talking to them and that this was actually what good friendship felt like. It felt like a gulp of cold water after trudging through a desert. *All this time? Stuck with the same people thinking that they are the only ones I had and that I had to keep them or I would have no one else? Silly me.* I should have moved on or been more open to more relationships. Instead, I stayed in my little corner of the lunchroom with my 3 friends who drifted away from me like a bottle on the waves. Or maybe it was me as the bottle in the sea. Maybe the bottle had drifted ashore elsewhere. I'm on a new island with greener trees and softer sand.

My other 3 friends have become more friendly and close to other people outside our group too. They have been moving on before me.

I had to move on with them.

I became happier with my new friends but I still kept in touch with the old. We stopped having lunch together even when the school allowed us to eat food in the same period now. They all had new friends and I had new friends. It seemed we all moved on without a word. Maybe that friendship just wasn't meant to be... The first people you meet at school aren't always the people that will stick with you forever.

Sometimes I mourn how I didn't make connections with others faster. Me and my 3 friends just didn't click. I should have seen that at the beginning but I was too afraid of letting go. I decided to ignore our failing friendship because I was afraid. I used to cling on to the first people I met but now, I know better than to do that. Sometimes I want to start again so I can meet others with more potential than this.

*Maybe I would've felt happier.*

Letting go isn't always easy but sometimes it can make you much happier and benefit your life more. Once you've let go, you'll finally realize how trapped you were before in that old life.

*Why am I so dramatic? I do love my internal monologues. I really should stop zoning out and actually talk to my new friend... Is she talking to me?*

"Hey hey. So, when's your birthday?" she inquired.

I grinned.

I liked her even more now.